

SAFETY BULLETIN – Severe Weather Safety

Severe Weather Awareness Week 2014 in Minnesota is April 21st – April 25th. This makes April a good time to be reminded of procedures to follow to be safe in severe weather both at and away from work.

At Work

- Know the severe weather safety procedures to follow for the building you work in.
- Know the severe weather safe areas for the building you work in. The severe weather safe area is usually the lowest floor of the building away from exterior windows and doors.
- Do not leave the severe weather safe area until the all-clear is given by the proper authority.

Away from Work

Tornado Safety Rules

- In a home or building, move to a pre-designated shelter, such as a basement.
- If an underground shelter is not available, move to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and get under a sturdy piece of furniture. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- Stay away from windows.
- Get out of automobiles.
- Do not try to outrun a tornado in your car; instead, leave it immediately for safe shelter.
- If caught outside or in a vehicle, lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands.
- Be aware of flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries.
- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes. You should leave a mobile home and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building or a storm shelter.



Lightning Safety Rules

- Postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are imminent. This is your best way to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.
- Move to a sturdy building or car. Do not take shelter in small sheds, under isolated trees, or in convertible automobiles. Stay away from tall objects such as towers, fences, telephone poles, and power lines.
- If lightning is occurring and a sturdy shelter is not available, get inside a hard top automobile and keep the windows up. Avoid touching any metal.
- Utility lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Unplug appliances not necessary for obtaining weather information. Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances. Use phones ONLY in an emergency.
- Do not take a bath or shower during a thunderstorm.
- Turn off air conditioners. Power surges from lightning can cause serious damage.



Lightning Safety If Caught Outside and No Shelter is Nearby

- Find a low spot away from trees, fences, and poles. Make sure the place you pick is not subject to flooding.
- If you are in the woods, take shelter under the shorter trees. Avoid isolated trees.
- If you feel your skin tingle or your hair stand on end, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground. DO NOT lie down.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately!

More information on severe weather safety can be found at the Minnesota Department of Public Safety website by accessing the following link: [SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK 2014](#).